DOCKET NO.: MSFT-2793/304866.01
Application No.: 10/726,080
Office Action Dated: March 6, 2007

PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116

REMARKS

This communication is in response to an Official Action dated 3/06/2007.

Applicants respectfully request that in the next written communication, the Examiner indicate acceptance of the drawings filed with the application on December 1, 2003 as formal.

Claims 8, 10-12, 20-25, and 27-30 are pending. Claims 8, 20, and 25 are independent. Claims 8, 10-12, 20 and 25 are amended herewith.

In the Official Action of 3/06/2007, claims 8, 10-12, 20-25, and 27-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Claims 8 and 10-12 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Claims 8 and 10-12 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Finally, claims 8, 10-12, 20-25, and 27-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102. The various outstanding rejections are addressed in turn below.

Interview Summary

Examiner Chen and Applicants' representative conducted a brief telephonic discussion of this matter on 4/24/2007. The status of the case was briefly discussed. No specific amendments were agreed upon. Applicants' representative agreed to follow up with this written response.

Rejection of Claims 8, 10-12, 20-25, and 27-30 Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 8, 10-12, 20-25, and 27-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Claims 8 and 10-12 were rejected for allegedly not being directed to physical hardware, for allegedly conditioning the production of concrete results on the output of a validating component, and for allegedly lacking an explicit and deliberate definition for the term "a subsystem."

Claims 8 and 10-12 are amended above to include, in independent claim 8, physical hardware including a processor and program code executable by said processor. Furthermore, the language making storing an XML instance conditional on validating is removed. Finally, the use of "a subsystem" is replaced by "program code executable by said processor" as will be appreciated by those of skill in the art and as discussed for example in paragraph 0107 of the written description.

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Claims 20-25 and 27-30 were rejected for allegedly conditioning the production of concrete results on whether an XML instance conforms to at least one schema. Independent claims 20 and 25 are amended above to remove the conditional language.

Rejection of Claims 8 and 10-12 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 8 and 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. The rejection was directed to the "a subsystem" language that is removed from the claims herewith. The language used to replace "a subsystem" is supported at least by specification paragraph 0107 as mentioned above.

Rejection of Claims 8 and 10-12 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 8 and 10-12 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, because the "a subsystem" terms were allegedly indefinite. The term "a subsystem" is replaced by "program code executable by said processor" which is clearly described in the specification and will be unambiguous to those of skill in the art.

Rejection of Claims 8, 10-12, 20-25, and 27-30 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 8, 10-12, 20-25, and 27-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Pat. 7,096,224 (Murthy). The rejection is respectfully traversed. In general, Murthy is directed to storing XML documents in a database by mapping various parts of the XML document to the structure of the database. *See, e.g.,* "Functional Overview" in col. 3, lines 25-62. In contrast, Applicants' claims generally define a system, method, and computer readable medium whereby a column in a database can be "typed" with a container for schema namespaces, allowing validation and storage in the column of instances conforming to all namespaces in the container.

Specifically, Murthy does not disclose typing database columns with a container for XML schema namespaces, as required by each of the independent claims. E.g., claim 8 requires, inter alia, "program code executable by said processor for typing said database column with said container." Claim 20 requires, inter alia, "typing a column of a relational database with said container." Claim 25 requires, inter alia, "computer readable instructions for typing said database column with said container."

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Murthy col. 9, lines 35-67 disclose "[b]y default, schema-based XMLType is stored in an underlying (hidden) object type column." However, this amounts to at most typing a column with a bare XML schema, not a container for schemas as required by the claims.

Conclusion

Having resolved all outstanding rejections in this application, Applicants respectfully request entry of the above amendments, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, allowance and passage to issue in due course.

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